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TAGS: [KNNP](#) [AORC](#) [ENRG](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [UNGA](#) [IR](#) [UK](#)  
SUBJECT: "LIFTING THE NUCLEAR SHADOW:" HMG WANTS TO  
REINVIGORATE THE NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT)  
PROCESS -- WITH U.S. BACKING

REF: A. SECSTATE 6970 (NOTAL)  
[1](#)B. UNVIE VIENNA 40 (NOTAL)  
[1](#)C. LONDON 422 (NOTAL)

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Greg Berry  
for reasons 1.4 b and d

[1](#)1. (C/NF) Summary. In the lead up to the April-May 2010 NPT Review Conference (RevCon), HMG will seek to cooperate closely with the U.S. at both the policy and experts level and will welcome United States leadership to reinvigorate the NPT (ref A). HMG seeks a reenergized and reinforced global nonproliferation regime; FS Miliband recently publicly expressed a renewed commitment to nonproliferation and disarmament. Dealing with Iran's attempts to obtain nuclear weapons remains Britain's top nonproliferation priority. HMG would welcome a "formal statement" from the U.S. and Russia that both nations would remain bound by the terms of START while negotiating START II and until a new treaty is ready. FCO interlocutors have shared a nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament "wish list" for President Obama's Administration and asked us questions about U.S. nonproliferation policy (see paragraph 10). End Summary.

The UK's Plan to "Lift the Nuclear Shadow"

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[1](#)2. (SBU) Foreign Secretary Miliband on February 3 publicly called for "re-energised multilateral action to avoid the risk of nuclear proliferation." An FCO "policy information paper," titled "Lifting the Nuclear Shadow: Creating the Conditions for Abolishing Nuclear Weapons," released to coincide with Miliband's remarks, sets forth three "conditions," and six steps which, the paper asserts, are "potentially attainable within the next few years." The paper asserts that "achieving a global ban on all nuclear weapons requires the creation of conditions which will give confidence to all those who are covered by a nuclear deterrent (over half the world's population) that their security will be greater in a world without nuclear weapons than with them." (Note: The text of the paper is available on the FCO website, [fco.gov.uk](http://fco.gov.uk). End note.)

[1](#)3. (C/NF) Poloff met February 10 with Nick Low (protect),

Head of the Nuclear Issues Section in the FCO's Counter Proliferation Department; Sunil Sood (protect), an officer with the Nuclear and UN Disarmament Desk of the FCO's Security Policy Group; and, Dr. Peter Carter (protect), Head of the Department of Energy and Climate Change's Nuclear Non-Proliferation Office to discuss HMG's nuclear nonproliferation strategy (ref A). These FCO officials stated that the FCO paper represents "nothing new" in terms of HMG policy formulation, noting Prime Minister Brown's long-time support for nonproliferation and disarmament. Rather, they asserted, Miliband, with the Prime Minister's support, has renewed emphasis on the goals of nonproliferation and disarmament in the year leading up to the April-May 2010 NPT RevCon. (Embassy Comment: Indeed, PM Brown declared in a speech before the New Delhi Chamber of Commerce January 21, 2008 that "in the run-up to the Non Proliferation Treaty review conference in 2010 we will be at the forefront of the international campaign to accelerate disarmament among possessor states, to prevent proliferation to new states, and to ultimately achieve a world that is free of nuclear weapons." End comment.)

#### No Nukes for Iran

14. (C/NF) Poloff reviewed with the FCO officers February 10 (and in subsequent conversations) British priorities for the April-May 2010 NPT Review Conference (ref A). They underscored that HMG's overall goal is a "reenergized and reinforced" global nonproliferation regime. HMG remains committed, they said, to the so-called "three pillars" of the NPT, namely non-proliferation, disarmament, and the right to

peacefully use nuclear technology. Indeed, Low underscored, former Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett laid out British policy toward nonproliferation in her June 25, 2007 speech to the Carnegie Endowment in Washington, D.C. In that speech, Beckett expressed strong support for both "movement on proliferation and disarmament - a revitalization, in other words, of the grand bargain struck in 1968, when the Non-Proliferation Treaty was established."

15. (C/NF) Nonetheless, Low continued, Britain's "primary goal of nonproliferation is to get Iran in compliance with the NPT." "Of course," Low continued, "Britain is committed to all three non-proliferation pillars but if we had to choose just one element for success," Iran would be that element.

#### What Would Success Look Like After the 2010 RevCon?

16. (C) In response to Poloff's request for further insights into the UK's NPT objectives (ref A), Low iterated that solving the issue of Iran's illicit nuclear efforts by the 2010 RevCon would constitute a major success. More generally, he continued, "success would mean no longer hearing the words 'NPT' and 'crisis' in the same sentence." Low noted that the NPT has "served the international community well" the past 40 years, since the number of nuclear armed states still numbers in the single digits and some countries have reversed their programs of nuclear armament. HMG supports NPT universality, but, in regard to the lack of universality of NPT safeguards agreements and the Additional Protocol, "we have not had debate yet on what we want the safeguards regime to look like," Low stated. (Note: The FCO publication, "Lifting the Nuclear Shadow," available on the FCO website, fco.gov.uk, supports pressing "every member state to have an Additional Protocol as the top priority. We also remain open to other ways in which the safeguards system can be strengthened." End note.) Low added that one way to reinvigorate the NPT would be to increase the "costs" for withdrawing from or violating the Treaty. Without offering details, Low said it should be "more difficult to pull out of the Treaty." Low asserted that a successful 2010 RevCon should have a "realistic" and "pragmatic" final statement but "not at the expense of not

mentioning Iran." Sood briefed on the status of UK plans to host a two-day conference in September 2009 titled "P5 Conference on Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) Towards Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament" (septel).

#### Nonproliferation: FCO's View on What the U.S. Can Do

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¶7. (C/NF) In response to Poloff's question about what HMG hopes to see from the USG in regard to the NPT (ref A), Low passed to Poloff a brief internal FCO paper prepared for FS Miliband and titled "What can we expect from the Obama Administration on nuclear non-proliferation/disarmament?" Low stated that the document was "close hold" and asked Poloff to disseminate its contents with discretion.

¶8. (C/NF). The paper begins with the formulation "Hope we can expect a great deal." (sic) It notes the value of strong U.S. leadership and states that "in her confirmation hearing Secretary of State Clinton stressed the importance of rebuilding, staffing and funding the relevant bureaux in State Department. She made clear there would be a very strong commitment to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) negotiation, that the Administration would engage other countries to reduce stockpiles of nuclear weapons, and work with Congress to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and revive negotiations on a verifiable Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT)." (sic)

9, (C/NF) When pressed by Poloff to elucidate further on HMG priorities, Low acknowledged that HMG "understands the limitations" facing President Obama's administration and does

not want to hold out for "unrealistic expectations" from the United States. Low asserted that a realistic and welcome nonproliferation "deliverable" would be a "formal statement" from both the U.S. and Russia that both nations would remain bound by the terms of START while negotiating START II and "until a new treaty is ready." Such a declaration, Low said, would be a "desired outcome."

#### Questions for the U.S.

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¶10. (C/NF) During their wide ranging February 10 discussion with Poloff about nonproliferation, Low, Sood and Carter raised the following questions about U.S. nonproliferation policy, which Poloff promised to convey to the State Department:

- They asked for insights into current USG thinking regarding the possible extension of the U.S. nuclear shield to friends and allies in the Middle East.

- They asked about USG attitudes toward regional nuclear weapons free zone agreements. They cited regional agreements in Southeast Asia and Central Asia as examples, acknowledging that these agreements "need serious revisions."

They stressed that both queries were informal, "food for thought" inquiries.

#### The Third Pillar: Peaceful Uses

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¶11. (C) Dr. Carter reviewed with Poloff during their February 10 meeting British plans to hold a Multilateral Fuel Assurances Conference in London March 17-18. Carter characterized peaceful use of nuclear power as the "operational end of nonproliferation," stressing that HMG's goal in hosting the conference is to "underpin and reinforce the NPT nuclear agenda as it relates to civil nuclear use." (Note: Ref C updates on the status of conference planning; see also ref B. End Note.)

#### Getting Out the Nonproliferation Message

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¶12. (C/NF) Low told Poloff that FS Miliband's February 3 public call for "re-energised multilateral action to avoid the risk of nuclear proliferation" represented an effort by HMG to "raise the consciousness" of the British public and the international community on topics which have a relatively limited public profile. He agreed that, apart from concerns about Iran, broader issues of nonproliferation, disarmament, and civilian use of nuclear power have "not struck a chord with the average, well-informed person" in Britain. Low asserted that better efforts at public education could increase public focus. He underscored that strong U.S. leadership would help focus the attention of the international community on NPT goals.

Comment

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¶13. (C/NF) HMG seeks strong leadership from the United States to reinvigorate efforts to strengthen the NPT and, as the in-house FCO paper prepared for FCO Miliband candidly acknowledges, the UK "expects a great deal" from the United States under President Obama's leadership. In the lead up to the April-May 2010 NPT RevCon, HMG will seek to cooperate closely with the U.S. at both the policy and experts level. Although Miliband's (and Brown's) support for NPT objectives may partly represent a strategy by the Labour government to shore up political support among activists on the left wing of the Labour Party -- a wing which has long identified strongly with the goals of nonproliferation and disarmament, even sometimes unilateral disarmament -- the HMG's recent emphasis on "lifting the nuclear shadow" reflects a genuine

hope that the time may be ripe for multilateral action to strengthen the NPT.

¶14. (SBU) NPT Point of Contact at Embassy London is Poloff Chris Palmer (PalmerCG@state.sgov.gov; PalmerCG@state.gov). Embassy London Econoff Karen Bronson covers issues related to the civilian use of nuclear power. (BronsonKL@state.sgov.gov; BronsonKL2@state.gov). The FCO's overall, working level lead on NPT issues is Nick Low, Head of the Nuclear Issues Section in the Counter-Proliferation Department; 44 (0)20 7008 6506; nick.low@fco.gov.uk.

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